

Saint Mary's University: Writing Centre - Student Policy

Mission Statement

The SMU Writing Centre is dedicated to fostering a collaborative learning environment that empowers students to enhance their writing and academic communication skills. To ensure a positive and productive experience, students are expected to adhere to the following policies when utilizing Writing Centre services.

Appointment Scheduling

Advance Booking:

- Students are encouraged to schedule appointments in advance to secure a time that suits their needs. You can book an appointment up to two weeks in advance. Drop-ins are accommodated, but appointments take precedence.

Cancellation and Rescheduling:

- If unable to attend a scheduled appointment, students are expected to cancel or reschedule at least 24 hours in advance to allow others the opportunity to book the slot (this excludes extenuating circumstances weather-related or illness-related cancellations).
- If the University closes, students will be notified, and their appointments will be rescheduled.
- It is your responsibility to make or change your own appointment. This can be done by emailing us at writing@smu.ca, visiting the Writing Centre [booking page](#) or by visiting us in Burke rm 115.

Session Guidelines

Preparation:

- Students should come to the Writing Centre with specific questions or concerns about their writing assignments or general academic communication skills.
- Bring any relevant assignment guidelines, rubrics, or instructor feedback to the session.

In person sessions

- Students are to arrive a few minutes early with a printed or a digital copy of your work on a laptop or tablet.

Virtual Sessions

- Online tutoring sessions are held on Teams.

- Students should ensure that their Teams is updated and that the microphone and camera are working properly.

Active Participation:

- Actively engage in the tutoring session by asking questions, seeking clarification, and providing input about your writing goals. **This is NOT an editing service.**
- Be open to constructive feedback and willing to participate in the revision process.
- Tutors will not comment on a student's grade or feedback on a paper.

Time Management:

- Respect the time allocated for each tutoring session to ensure all students have a chance to receive assistance. Each session is approximately 50 minutes long.
- If you are booking a Graduate session, those are approximately 2 hours long.
- Do not expect tutors to complete your assignments for you; rather, focus on learning and improving your writing and academic communication skills.

Assignment Submission

Original Work:

- Bring your own original work for review. Plagiarism or providing someone else's work is strictly prohibited.
- At the Writing Centre, we focus on enhancing YOUR own writing and academic communication skills, please do not come in with Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content. This takes away from a writing session's purpose.
- For more information, please visit the [Patrick Power Library's guide on AI](#).

Instructor Permission:

- Ensure that you have your instructor's permission to seek assistance on graded assignments or take-home exams
- Adhere to any specific guidelines they have provided.

Professional Conduct

Respectful Communication:

- Maintain a respectful and courteous tone during interactions with tutors and other students.
- The Writing Centre is a shared workspace, so make sure that phones and other devices are on silent. If you must take a phone call, please step outside.
- Avoid disruptive behavior that may impact the learning environment.

Confidentiality:

- Respect the confidentiality of other students. Do not discuss or share details about others' writing sessions.

Follow-Up:**Implementation of Feedback:**

- Act on and engage with the feedback received during the tutoring session to improve your writing skills and enhance the quality of your assignments.

Return Visits:

- Feel free to return for additional sessions as needed. Continued improvement often requires multiple visits.
- Students can book up to 2 hours of tutoring a week. These sessions cannot be back-to-back.
- If you are with the Fred Smithers Centre, you can book up to 3 hours of tutoring a week.